



RURAL PROOFING: OECD LESSONS LEARNED

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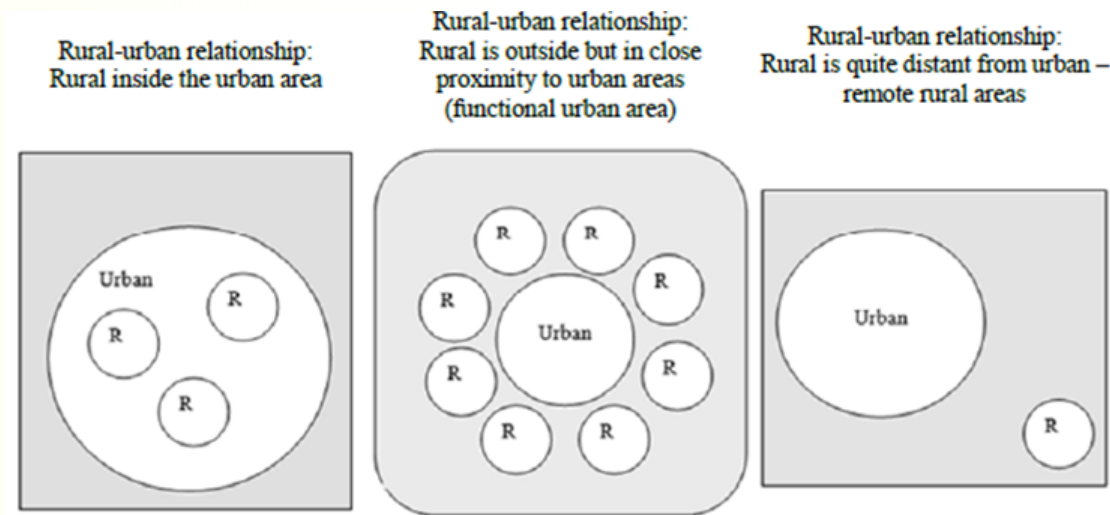


OECD Rural Policy: From the New Rural Paradigm to Well-Being

	Old paradigm	New Rural Paradigm (2006)	Rural Well-being: Geography of Opportunities
Objectives	Equalisation	Competitiveness	Well-being considering multiple dimensions of: i) the economy, ii) society and iii) the environment
Policy focus	Support for a single dominant resource sector	Support for multiple sectors based on their competitiveness	Low-density economies differentiated by type of rural area
Tools	Subsidies for firms	Investments in qualified firms and communities	Integrated rural development approach – spectrum of support to the public sector, firms and third sector
Key actors and stakeholders	Farm organisations and national governments	All levels of government and all relevant departments plus local stakeholders	Involvement of: i) public sector – multi-level governance, ii) private sector – for-profit firms and social enterprise, and iii) third sector – non-governmental organisations and civil society
Policy approach	Uniformly applied top-down policy	Bottom-up policy, local strategies	Integrated approach with multiple policy domains
Rural definition	Not urban	Rural as a variety of distinct types of place	Three types of rural: i) within a functional urban area (FUA), ii) close to an FUA, and iii) far from an FUA



Policy Considerations for 3 types of Rural Areas



❖ Definitions can help better tailor policy responses

- Rural areas face different challenges, opportunities and policy responses
- Countries defining different types of rural regions
- Context matters: different countries have different definitions



OECD Observations:

1. **Places of opportunity:** One-fourth of the population and generate one-fifth of gross domestic product (GDP) across OECD countries.
2. **Economic diversification:** In addition to providing the vast majority of food, energy, and environmental services, rural places are also a growing source of manufacturing and service sector production.
3. **Diversity of profiles, diversity of needs:** – location, resource endowment, demographic structure and proximity to cities are all factors that make up for this variability.
4. **Enabling productivity growth:** Tradable sector drives productivity growth, if built around diversification. Enable productivity growth by investing in skills, innovation, infrastructure, digitalisation and the business environment.
5. **Smart specialisation is strategic for low-density economies:** Low-density economies can move up to higher value added activities by investing in their unique assets (absolute advantage).



OECD Observations:

6. **Rural-Urban Partnerships:** There is a need for greater collaboration between urban and rural areas in service delivery, public investment and management of public goods.
7. **Promoting bottom up approaches**
8. **Integrated policy approach:** Strong coordination mechanisms have to be in place in order to align sectorial policies.
9. **Institutions matter:** Efficient, effective and accountable local and regional institutions are needed to deliver place-based
10. **Success is not a single number:** Success of rural areas must consider economic competitiveness, well-being of citizens and environmental sustainability.
11. **Meet you in the middle:** National and regional strategies and coordination can enable bottom-up initiatives. Local stakeholders – citizens, organised civil society, private sector and municipal governments – ought to have greater access to data and be engaged in monitoring and evaluation of rural policies.



OECD Principles of Rural Policy

Targeting policy actions for all types of rural areas

- **Principle 1.** Maximise the potential of all rural areas
- **Principle 2.** Organise policies and governance at the relevant geographic scale by:
- **Principle 3.** Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas

Adopting integrated and effective strategies to build smart, sustainable and inclusive rural areas fit for the future

- **Principle 4.** Set a forward looking vision for rural policies
- **Principle 5.** Leverage the potential of rural areas to benefit from globalisation, trade and digitalisation
- **Principle 6.** Supporting entrepreneurship to foster job creation in rural areas
- **Principle 7.** Align strategies to deliver public services with rural policies
- **Principle 8.** Strengthen the social, economics, ecological and cultural resilience of rural communities

Engaging stakeholders in policies for rural areas

- **Principle 9.** Implement a whole-of-government approach to policies for rural areas
- **Principle 10.** Promote inclusive engagement in the design and implementation of rural policy
- **Principle 11.** Foster monitoring, independent evaluation and accountability of policy outcomes in rural areas



Rural Proofing

“...Rural Proofing...will ensure that when policy-makers sit down to design the rules they take into account the unique factors that affect rural communities such as low populations, isolation, and reliance on the primary sector for employment.”

New Zealand Govt.



Rural Proofing: Visibility, Leadership/buy-in at the top

- It is evident that with all things in place the “champion” element may be necessary in the short term to help stimulate interest and commitment



Rural Proofing: Knowledge

- Requires a comprehension of rural *e.g.* education element
- Rural proofing is not a straightforward endeavour. It is truly challenging, complex, “hard-to-get-right” and requires substantial place-based sensitivity and understanding.



Rural Proofing: Who and the ability to act.

- Sometimes, the responsibilities for rural proofing is not clear and fluid in practice at the national, regional, or local level.
- In fact there were instances where the role and responsibility for rural proofing was not easily articulated by sub-national level actors



Rural Proofing: When

- **Timing is important** as it allows for an opportunity to adjust policy when a less than desirable impact on rural communities is projected.
- “lack of understanding about ‘the need for (or when to) rural proof’ is one of the factors still impeding rural proofing success”.
- In many instances, the early consultative phase represents the critical moment when information about rural is most needed, and yet is to a certain extent unknown



Rural Proofing is less successful when...

- Rural proofing is not being applied systematically across all departments;
- Some senior staff are not aware of the need to carry out rural proofing;
- There is a lack of leadership in place to champion the needs of rural communities across governments; and
- Delivery of policies on rural communities is not being effectively monitored



Some factors to help embed Rural Proofing

- Designating “champions” at the official and non-executive level, who are not to become solely responsible for conducting rural proofing, but are also to champion the sector’s interest and support others to build their knowledge and awareness.
- Setting up rural advisory groups to be responsible for raising awareness of rural issues within departments and organisations.
- Bringing in short term expert advice and support from relevant organization to provide specific, tailored, expertise to inform the development of particular policies and initiatives.
- Holding briefing and training opportunities for policy-making staff to build knowledge and capacity.
- Making use of the extensive data, research, evidence and advice the organisations can offer



Points for consideration – CA Rural Lens

- In Canada, rural proofing was established at the end of 1990s:
- Accordingly all new policy development were subject to a form of rural policy impact assessment.
- Within Canada's Rural Secretariat, a group of five public servants administer the Canadian Rural Lens with colleagues in other departments in applying the Rural Lens to new policy initiatives



Points for consideration – Rural Proofing Guide?

- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador developed a Rural Lens tool, which ensures that rural concerns and priorities are considered fully in policy- and decision-making processes.
- The Rural Lens policy assessment tool helps provincial departments and agencies to identify potential rural impacts of policies and decisions – positive and negative, direct and indirect – in a proactive, objective and uniform

GUIDE TO USING THE RURAL LENS

WHAT IS THE RURAL LENS?

It's an element of the Canadian Rural Partnership, a tool to help you factor the needs of rural and remote Canadians into new policies, programs, and regulations.

WHY SHOULD YOU USE THE RURAL LENS?

- To strengthen your initiative by ensuring that **all** Canadians and the communities they live in—rural, remote and urban—benefit.
- To help the government deliver on its commitment to improve the quality of life in rural and remote Canada, as outlined in the 1997, 1999 and 2001 Speeches from the Throne.
- To strengthen your Minister's contribution to the Annual Report to Parliament on Rural Canada (coordinated by the Rural Secretariat).
- To maximize the opportunity to make good public policy by testing its impact on rural and remote Canada right at the start, thus reducing the likelihood of making modifications at the end of the development process to include rural and remote considerations.

HOW TO USE THE GUIDE:



Rural Proofing Process: New Zealand

The NZ Rural Proofing process includes 7 steps to aid policy advisors.

1. Confirm your policy objectives;
2. Identify the benefits and implications of proposed policies and programmes for the rural community;
3. Seek advice from relevant rural contacts and organisations;
4. Assess the implications of your policy – are they significantly different for the rural community than for urban centres?
5. Consider mitigation measures;
6. Make adjustments to policies, programmes and implementation plans; and
7. Keep parties updated, including Ministers and departments if there are any unresolved implications.



Rural Proofing: OECD Next Steps

- OECD in collaboration with WHO is examining the state of Rural Proofing in 2022 in OECD countries. Intimate workshops with:
 - Countries actively engaged or have a formal policy;
 - Countries that do not have a formal policy but have examples of rural proofing
 - Interested, academics and experts
- WHO -Rural Proofing Meeting at the OECD Ireland Rural Conference 28-29 Sept. 2022

Thank you!



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